

MLK vs. Malcolm X (similarities/differences)

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Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X are very prominent African American individuals throughout history. They fought for what they stood for but in many different ways. As we all know in history there are no two great men that are alike. Their many beliefs may have blossomed from the households they came from and how they grew up. King grew up in a middle class family and was well educated. In contrast, Malcolm X grew up in an underprivileged environment that was very hostile with barely any schooling. Martin Luther King Jr. was always against violence, throughout his entire ministry. He always stood his ground, and he stood out because even though he may have been physically attacked, he never reacted with violence. Martin Luther King Jr. followed the Christian faith. Malcolm X was a Muslim, and believed in Muslim principles. His most famous line was "By any Means Necessary". He believed in fighting back physically. Whatever had to be done to get freedom he was all for it whether it be violence or nonviolence. Although later in life he visited Jerusalem, and met other Muslims. He changed his views, and became nonviolent.

One of the most famous civil rights acts was the March on Washington, which portrays the different perspectives of Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X. The March on Washington took place on August 28, 1963. Over 20,000 people came to march from Washington to the Lincoln memorial in Washington D.C. This march happened to be one of Martin Luther King Jr.'s greatest accomplishments throughout his life. This event is where he took the crown for the face of the civil rights movement. Even in a time of violence, King would never act out. King wanted all the races to come together for the hatred and violence to be put to a halt.

Malcolm X had a different perspective regarding the march. He felt that integration would destroy the black and the white man. He felt that American blacks should be more concerned with helping each other. He felt blacks should start by giving the same race self-respect first. He did not agree with what King had to say, he felt that King's dream was not a dream but a nightmare.

MLK's approach to civil rights/equality was non-violent protesting, speaking out for non-violence, passive resistance, and what he called, "weapons of love". However, Malcolm X's approach to civil rights/equality was extremely different. He was suspicious of whites, willing to use "by any means necessary" to achieve equality. He was a segregationist until he went to Mecca. The commonality that they both share is that they both wanted equal rights for African Americans; they just went down different paths to receive those rights.